

**STILLWATER COUNTY
COMMISSIONER MINUTES**

<p>Notice: These minutes reflect the proceedings of the Board of County Commissioners. The official minutes are on file with the Clerk and Recorder MCA 7-4-2611(2)(b).</p>
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**REGULAR MEETING
March 22, 2022**

PRESENT Commissioners Tyrel Hamilton, Chair, Mark Crago, Steve Riveland, members, Heidi Stadel, Clerk & Recorder.

Others Present: Kevin Ray, Road & Bridge; Stephanie Ray, Economic Development; Marlo Pronovost, Stillwater County News; Randy Smith, SCSO; Kisha Cornell, City of Columbus; Citizens: Jeff Ruffatto, Ron Van Hoosear, Maureen Davey, Corey Hyatt, Carol Cushen.

PLEDGE Commissioner Hamilton opened the meeting with the Pledge of Allegiance.

MINUTES March 1, 2022. Commissioner Crago **MOVED** to approve the minutes as presented. Commissioner Riveland **SECONDED**. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

CLAIMS 109041 through 109218 in the amount of \$360,641.37. Commissioner Riveland **MOVED** to approve claims 109041 through 109218 in the amount of \$360, 641.37. Commissioner Crago **SECONDED**. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

ANNOUNCEMENTS Commissioner Hamilton announced that April 5, 2022 is the traveling agenda meeting which will be held at the Stockman Café in Rapelje.

FILE ITEMS **DES**
A) Absarokee repeater station lease agreement renewal in the amount of \$500.00.

B) FEMA PDM approval letter.

Absarokee Sewer
A) Resolution 2022-06 Absarokee wastewater bond closeout.

Weed Department
A) CIP project plan.

Commissioner Crago **MOVED** to file the file items. Commissioner Riveland **SECONDED**. Discussion – Commissioner Hamilton explained that the bond closeout is \$4,100,000.00. Commissioner Hamilton further explained that by completing the bond closeout early, it saves the Absarokee Sewer District approximately \$1,000,000.00 in interest alone over the duration of the bond. This is very beneficial to the Absarokee Sewer District. Maureen Davey asked when would the project start. Commissioner Hamilton replied that the project is already under construction. There is a meeting April 5, with the engineer and the construction company regarding completion of the project. They had to go through a second winter shutdown. They are currently looking at a 45-to-60-day construction window which may now be closer to a 60-to-120-day construction window to complete the project. Hopefully with the meeting on April 5 there will be a finalized plan for project completion. Motion passed unanimously.

REGULAR BUSINESS **Road & Bridge**
A) Approve roadway map and mileage certification for fuel tax allocation. Commissioner Riveland **MOVED** to approve the approve roadway map and mileage certification for fuel tax allocation. Commissioner Crago **SECONDED**. Discussion – Kevin Ray explained that

the difference in mileage is approximately 45 miles less due to the difference in the mapping systems. Motion passed unanimously.

B) Approve Stillwater County gravel specification and road mix. Commissioner Crago **MOVED** to approve Stillwater County gravel specification and road mix. Commissioner Riveland **SECONDED**. Discussion – Kevin Ray explained that they condensed it down to one form to hand out to all the contractors putting gravel on the county roads. The only thing that changed was the PI and the gravel size. This will be an addendum to the road use agreements so should it change in the future the addendums can be changed instead of the entire contract. Motion passed unanimously.

Economic Development

A) RFP for Crow Chief Meadows fencing project. Commissioner Riveland **MOVED** to approve the RFP for Crow Chief Meadows fencing project. Commissioner Crago **SECONDED**. Discussion – Maureen Davey asked who will be paying for this. Commissioner Hamilton explained that the county will be paying for this. Maureen Davey asked if it was for a subdivision. Commissioner Riveland explained that the septic system for one lot was approved and set and it was overlapping onto the neighbor's lot. The county corrected that with a property line adjustment. The agreement between the county and the landowners was to quit deed enough land to move the boundaries so the septic system is now within setback limits and is on the proper lot in trade for the county fencing approximately 5 acres and approximately 1900 linear feet of fence. This is a lot cheaper than the alternative to remedy the problem. There is currently no dollar amount and this is the start of the proposal for the project. Maureen Davey asked if the septic was put in the wrong place by the county? Commissioner Hamilton explained that it was the fault of the county sanitarian at the time. Motion passed unanimously.

B) RFP for Road & Bridge complex fencing project. Commissioner Crago **MOVED** to approve the RFP for Road & Bridge complex fencing project. Commissioner Riveland **SECONDED**. No discussion. Motion passed unanimously.

Airport Board

A) Request for payment #6 for pavement maintenance in the amount of \$3,591.00. Commissioner Riveland **MOVED** to approve the request for payment #6 for pavement maintenance in the amount of \$3,591.00. Commissioner Crago **SECONDED**. Discussion – Marlo Pronovost asked if that is the total amount. Kisha explained that is the total of the invoice. Commissioner Hamilton explained that the amount is \$1,795.50 each for the City of Columbus and the county. Motion passed unanimously.

B) Request for permission to loan FAA grant funds to West Yellowstone Airport. Commissioner Crago **MOVED** to approve the request for permission to loan FAA grant funds to West Yellowstone Airport. Commissioner Riveland **SECONDED**. Discussion – Kisha Miller explained that those who participate in the FAA grant program are provided \$150,000.00 each year in grant funds. The city has funds every year that are good for four years. These funds are basically funds from 2020 which have not been used and are not the full portion of the funds, the funds available are approximately \$78,000.00 or \$79,000.00. The funds would be loaned to West Yellowstone for their terminal and when the city is ready to do a bigger project, for example the hangar project, the city will request the loan back. The funds can be lost if not used in the appropriate time period. Ron Van Hoosear asked if it is also an advantage that it resets the clock on the time period for the funds to be used. Kisha Miller replied that yes it does. Motion passed unanimously.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON COUNTY BUSINESS – Maureen Davey stated that it has come to her attention that a county department head meeting was held March 9 and that it was announced by Commissioner Crago that he had no intention of running for Commissioner again. Commissioner Crago's last full week would be March 14 because he was starting a part time job and that he would do both positions. Some of the points of the meeting was that Commissioner Crago wanted to fulfill his duty to the taxpayers and in fairness to all (the department heads). Also, that he would make more money in the private sector. His decision

is based 99.9% financially made because it is more money in the private sector. He also stated to the staff he is available by phone and email and to reach out to him as in the past. That if the staff feels he has failed them or let them down to let him know. It was also said that if was discussed with Ty and Steve and they agreed until mid-June to revisit it and that there was full support by Ty and Steve. Further, Maureen stated that she had a couple of comments or questions. When was this meeting held with the other Commissioners and was it recorded? Also, this announcement is of significant interest to the whole county but was discussed during a staff/department head meeting. The taxpayers and residents of Stillwater County deserve to know that. Was Commissioner Crago's first announcement at the department head meeting. By statute, the Commissioner position is full time with a full-time annual salary in Stillwater County and this happened in the 80's. People run for this position because it is a full-time position and if you can't make a full-time position, it is time to move on. Maureen asked will Commissioner Crago do the ethical thing and either be a full time Commissioner or resign. Commissioner Riveland replied that to answer her first question, it was a brief meeting, less than five minutes, in his office and was not recorded. This is when Commissioner Crago had relayed to Commissioner Hamilton and Commissioner Riveland that he had taken a part time job and was going to attempt to fulfill the duties of Commissioner and the part time private sector job. Commissioner Hamilton added is that Commissioner Crago had just mentioned that he was looking for jobs and had not actually accepted a job at that point. Commissioner Hamilton went on to say that the way he remembered the conversation was that when should Commissioner Crago accept a job between now and June, they would do the best to make it work in fairness to the two Commissioner Candidates running for the Commissioner position, knowing that by the second week of June, the voters will have spoken on which Commissioner candidate they want to be the next Commissioner and if he had accepted a job at that point and it was not working out for both parties then that would be a good time to look at that transition. At that point Commissioner Crago had not accepted a position but was just relaying that he was actively looking for jobs. Maureen Davey replied that is not how it comes across. Brandon Garoutte played a portion of the recorded department head meeting recording pertaining to Commissioner Crago's announcement to start his part time job (the full recording is available in the Clerk & Recorder's office) Brandon Garoutte asked Commissioner Crago asked if planned on taking a part time salary for the two days he works for the county. Commissioner Crago stated that this is the public comment period and the Commission does not need to engage in it at this time.

Karla Johnson stated that she would like to discuss election integrity. She passed out the attached papers which she contained information she obtained from the Secretary of State's website. Karla noted that one the first chart it shows that there is now 1049 more people than 2020 than in 2016. After a decline in democrat votes in the county since 2008. Did Biden reverse the trend and start a democratic surge in Stillwater County. This is why numbers are so important. On the 2020 election results it shows that the numbers all different and that if it shows a true vote the numbers would be the same. A lot of the candidates got more votes than President Trump which, she thinks, is an impossibility. The numbers tell the truth. There is no need for an audit. The numbers are not realistic to have this percentage of turnout. In reviewing the numbers, the only correct action is to decertify the 2020 election. Karla went on to say that it is her understanding that the Commissioners certified the 2020 election. Heidi Stadel stated that all three Commissioners present at the canvass would have signed it.

With no further comments heard the meeting was adjourned at 9:22 a.m.

APPROVED BY: /s/ Tyrel Hamilton, Commissioner Chairman

ATTEST: Heidi L. Stadel, Clerk and Recorder